

Wisdom Teeth, Teeth Extraction and Surgical Removal of Teeth Post-operative Care Information

Wisdom teeth removal or surgical extractions is a common surgical procedure. Following the post-operative care tips listed below can minimize your recovery time after these procedures. In addition, they can decrease unnecessary pain and swelling, and help you avoid complications such as infection.

After a surgical removal of teeth, Dr Botha recommends on the day of your surgery that you:

- Restrict your activities.
- Avoid touching the wound area.
- Do not vigorously rinse your mouth.
- Apply ice to your cheeks outside the surgery site.
- Remove the gauze surgical pad 30 minutes after your surgery if inserted.
- Take the prescribed pain medications as soon as you begin to feel discomfort.

Here are some additional wisdom teeth removal aftercare instructions which can make your recovery more comfortable.

Bleeding

Slight bleeding, oozing or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Excessive bleeding may be controlled placing a gauze pad over the surgical area and biting firmly for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened tea bag for another 30 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. You can also minimize bleeding by staying calm, sitting upright and avoiding exercise. If bleeding continues, call our office.

Pain

If you have moderate pain, take Paracetamol, Brufen or a combination every four to six hours. For severe pain, take your prescribed pain medication as directed. Stop taking them if you develop a rash or experience other side effects. Pain meds can make you dizzy so be sure to stand up gradually. Pain or discomfort following surgery should lessen each day. If pain persists, please call our office.

Nausea

In the event of nausea and/or vomiting, do not take anything by mouth for at least an hour after surgery. Then sip slowly on coke, tea or ginger ale. Once the nausea subsides, you can start taking the prescribed medicine.

Swelling/discoloration

You may experience swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes and sides of the face. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. Swelling will appear soon after surgery and will not reach its maximum until two to three days following surgery. Apply ice to help with swelling. In some cases, black, blue, green or yellow discoloration occurs due to blood spreading beneath the tissues—this is a normal and moist heat might help.

Diet

Drink plenty of liquids—at least five to six glasses daily. Do not use straws because the sucking motion can dislodge the blood clot around the surgical site. We recommend eating soft foods that are high in calorie and protein. Try not to miss a meal. You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat.



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Oral hygiene

You can brush your teeth the night of surgery, but rinse gently and be careful around the surgery site. The day after wisdom teeth removal surgery, you should begin rinsing at least five to six times a day, especially after meals. We suggest keeping your mouth clean with salt water rinses or a toothbrush.

Stitches/dry socket

Stitches help minimize bleeding and promote healing. Sometimes the stitches may become dislodged—do not be concerned, simply discard them. The stitches will dissolve 10-14 days after surgery. Dry socket is when the blood clot gets dislodged prematurely from the tooth socket. Pain at the surgical site and even ear pain may occur in two to three days. Call the office if this occurs.

Other wisdom teeth removal complications

- Numbness of the lip, chin or tongue is usually temporary.
- Slight temperature elevation post wisdom teeth removal is not uncommon—you can take Paracetamol or ibuprofen. If fever persists, please call our office.
- You may also feel hard projections, which are bony walls that support the tooth. They usually smooth out in time.
- Your lips may be dry and cracked—keep them moistened.
- Sore throat and pain when swallowing can occur and will subside in two to three days.
- Stiffness of the jaw muscles may cause difficulty opening the mouth. This is a normal and will get better.

Have more post wisdom tooth extraction questions?

Do you have additional concerns about your wisdom teeth removal, surgical removal of teeth or extractions of teeth? Contact Dr Botha's office at 012 346 6032.

